Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue 627

Adoṣa-darśitā Guṇagrāhitā

Overlooking Faults and Finding Virtues

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तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

Sri Krishna Kathamrita
Bindu

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 627 | *Śrī Śayana Ekādaśī* | 25 July 2026

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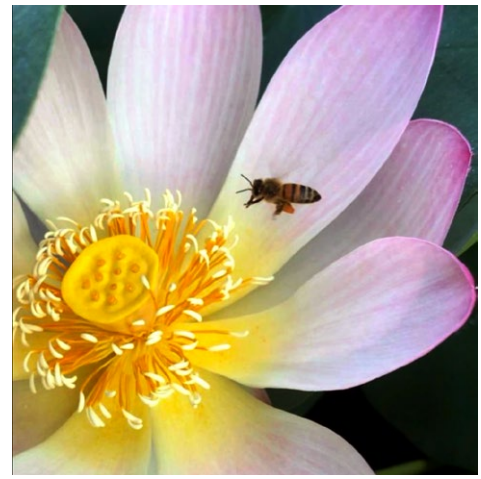
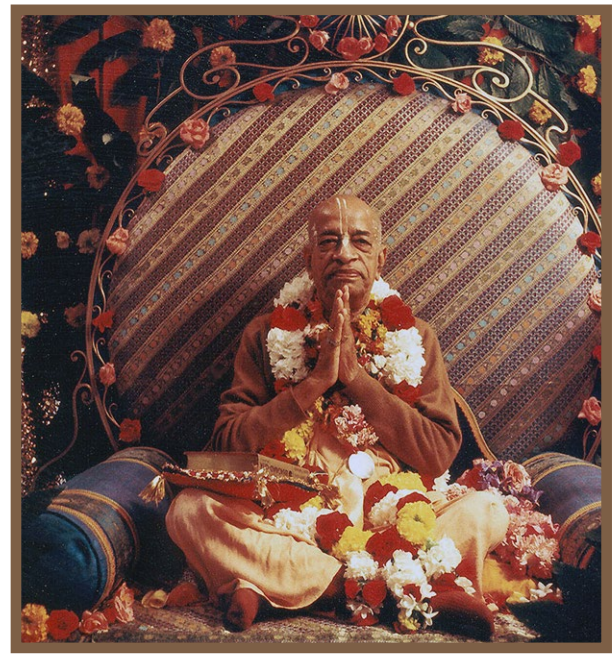


Hate the Sin, Not the Sinner

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

In this material world, all conditioned souls are under illusion. A doctor treats all patients, and although a patient may be delirious and insult the doctor, the doctor does not refuse to treat him. He still administers the medicine that is required. As Lord Jesus Christ said, we should hate the sin, not the sinner. That is a very nice statement, because the sinner is under illusion. He is mad. If we hate him, how can we deliver him? Therefore, those who are advanced devotees, who are really servants of God, do not hate anyone. When Lord Jesus Christ was being crucified, he said, "Dear God, forgive them for they know not what they do." This is the proper attitude of an advanced devotee. He understands that the conditioned souls cannot be hated, because they have become mad due to their materialistic way of thinking. In this Krishna consciousness movement, there is no question of hating anyone. Everyone is welcome to come and chant Hare Krishna, take *kṛṣṇa-prasāda,* listen to the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā,* and try to rectify material, conditioned life. This is the essential program of Krishna consciousness.



Unknown photographer.

— *The Path of Perfection.* Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., 1979. Chapter 3.

Cover: Haridasa Thakur tolerates being beaten in twenty-two marketplaces. Unknown artist.

Unknown artist. From Malwa Madhya Pradesh. Ca. 1700

Krishna enters Mathura

Mirrors of Malice

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Debate arises only from a desire for conquest. It is extremely abominable. Fault-finding arises only from imposing one's own bad habits on others. This should be given up in all respects. (*Bhaktyāloka* section 3 on *prajalpa*)

Being induced by propensities that are detrimental to devotional service, like envy, hatred, pride or desire for fame, those who criticize others are offenders at the feet of *bhakti-devī*. (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 10.10, quoted in *Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhāva* 74.5)

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The Anatomy of Introspection

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

The best of all persons thinks himself to be less than all others. Why should a person be anxious to pry into the defects of others when he does not seek to scrutinize his own conduct? The acts and expressions of the *vaiṣṇavas* cannot be understood even by the wise. Let us not be misled by the apparent sight. Many a person has mistaken a pebble for a pearl; a snake for a rope; evil for good; by falling victim to delusion due to relying on apparent sight. When faults in others misguide and delude you, you should have patience, be introspective, and find the faults in yourself. Know that others cannot harm you unless you harm yourself.

— *Sri Chaitanya's Teachings.* Edited by Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Goswami. Sree Gaudiya Math. Madras. 1989. Page 103.

Painting by B. K. Mitra. Gita Press. Gorakhpur.

Krishna plays his flute on the bank of the Yamuna

Painting by manaku of Guler. Around 1740.

One of Ravan's commanders is advising him while his army waits outside

Open Your Eyes To the Good

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

In the *śāstras* and in the *Bhāgavata* it is said that this *nindā-karaṇa*, criticizing and finding fault with others, is a great *anartha*. Don't do it! It is not your lookout. That is guru's business, it is his lookout. The sages say, "Only see the good in others. Don't see the bad. If you have the nature or tendency to see bad, then see what bad is there in you." This is an *āptavacana*, authoritative instruction: "If you find something good in some person, then that is what you should accept. Close your eyes to the bad things and open your eyes to the good."

There is one story in this regard. Once a disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Maharaja came to him and spoke ill of another disciple. "Maharaja, Mr. X is doing this thing and that thing." For half an hour he spoke all bad things about that other disciple.

With much patience, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati listened. Then he said, "All right, you have spoken all bad things about him. Is there nothing good in him?"

"Yes, Maharaja. He sings very nice *kīrtana*."

"Then why don't you speak that thing? You spoke all bad of him, but you never said that he sings nice *kīrtana*."

To find fault or criticize some *vaiṣṇava* is not good at all. Doing so you will commit *aparādha*, and that is a great *anartha*. Only someone who is perfect can find fault and correct another person. He has the right to be critical because he is perfect and has no defects in himself. If you have some defects, then why are you seeing the faults in others and speaking about them? Thus, the *ācāryas*, *sādhus*, and *śāstras* have forbidden it.

— From a lecture on 22 December 1994. Published in, *The Worship of Sri Guru*. Pp. 39-43. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa. 2000.

Unknown artist. From Mankot, in Jammu and Kashmir. Circa 1725.

Next to a pillar in his palace, Hiranyakashipu is about to cut off the head of his son Prahlad

Unknown artist. Pahari style. C. 1700.

Battle between Lord Ramachandra's monkeys and the demon followers of Ravan

Adoṣa-darśitā Guṇagrāhitā

Overlooking Faults and Finding Virtues

Per their publishing standard, no name was given for the author of this article, which was from the weekly Gauḍīya *and published in* Gauḍīya-Prabandha-Mālā*, volume II. It was published under the guidance of the editor Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada.*

Śrī śrī rūpānugavara Srila Narottam Thakur has described the worshipable *vaiṣṇava* as *adoṣa-darśī* — one who does not see faults in others. To not see faults in others but to perceive and cherish their virtues is the natural disposition of a genuine *vaiṣṇava*.

A *vaiṣṇava* is *guṇa-grāhī* — one who eagerly accepts and appreciates virtue. Overlooking the defects of others, they regard even the slightest inclination toward service to Bhagavan as something great and worthy of honor. The contrary tendency to perceive faults where none exist, to magnify even insignificant defects, and then to publicize and analyze them is the characteristic disposition of the non-*vaiṣṇava*.

A *vaiṣṇava ṭhākura* never gratifies the itching of their ears by listening to accounts of another person's blameworthy conduct. Their cupped ears are perpetually engaged in drinking the supremely purifying nectar-stream of *hari-kathā*, the divine narrations concerning Sri Hari, *śrī guru*, and the *vaiṣṇavas*.

Although a *vaiṣṇava* is *adoṣa-darśī* toward others, he is always *sva-doṣa-darśī* — keenly aware of his own shortcomings. One who is not conscious of his own faults can never become truly free from *fault-finding* nor genuinely appreciative of others' virtues. In other words, a person who does not constantly perceive his own defects will inevitably find himself perceiving the defects of others.

One whose heart is not continuously adorned with the disposition of self-reproach — *ātma-dhikkāra,* or in whose display of humility some trace of duplicity has entered, can never become an *adoṣa-darśī vaiṣṇava*. Genuine freedom from *fault-finding* is born only from sincere self-examination, profound humility, and an unwavering absorption in the glories of Bhagavan, guru, and *vaiṣṇavas*.

By an unknoown artist. From Gujarat. C. 1625-1650.

After Putana died, Mother Yashoda picked up Krishna from the lap of the demoness

Unknown artist. Pahari school. C. 1700–25.

Hanuman watches Sita in Ravan's Ashok Grove

It is a self-seeking desire for prestige, hypocrisy, and envy alone that gives rise to the tendency for *fault-finding* in others. A *vaiṣṇava* is free from envy (*nirmatsara*), humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all desire for honor, eager to offer honor to others, and constantly engaged in glorifying the holy name and fame of Sri Hari.

One who is truly *tṛṇād api sunīca* — humbler than a blade of grass — cannot be a faultfinder. Such a soul is *adoṣa-darśī*, *sva-doṣa-darśī*, and *para-guṇa-grāhī* — one who eagerly appreciates the virtues of others. Likewise, one who is tolerant like a tree:

> *vṛkṣa yena kāṭileha kichu nā bolaya*
> *śukāñā maileha kā're pāni nā māgaya*
>
> Even when cut down, a tree utters no protest; even when drying up, it begs water from no one. (*Cc. antya* 20.23)

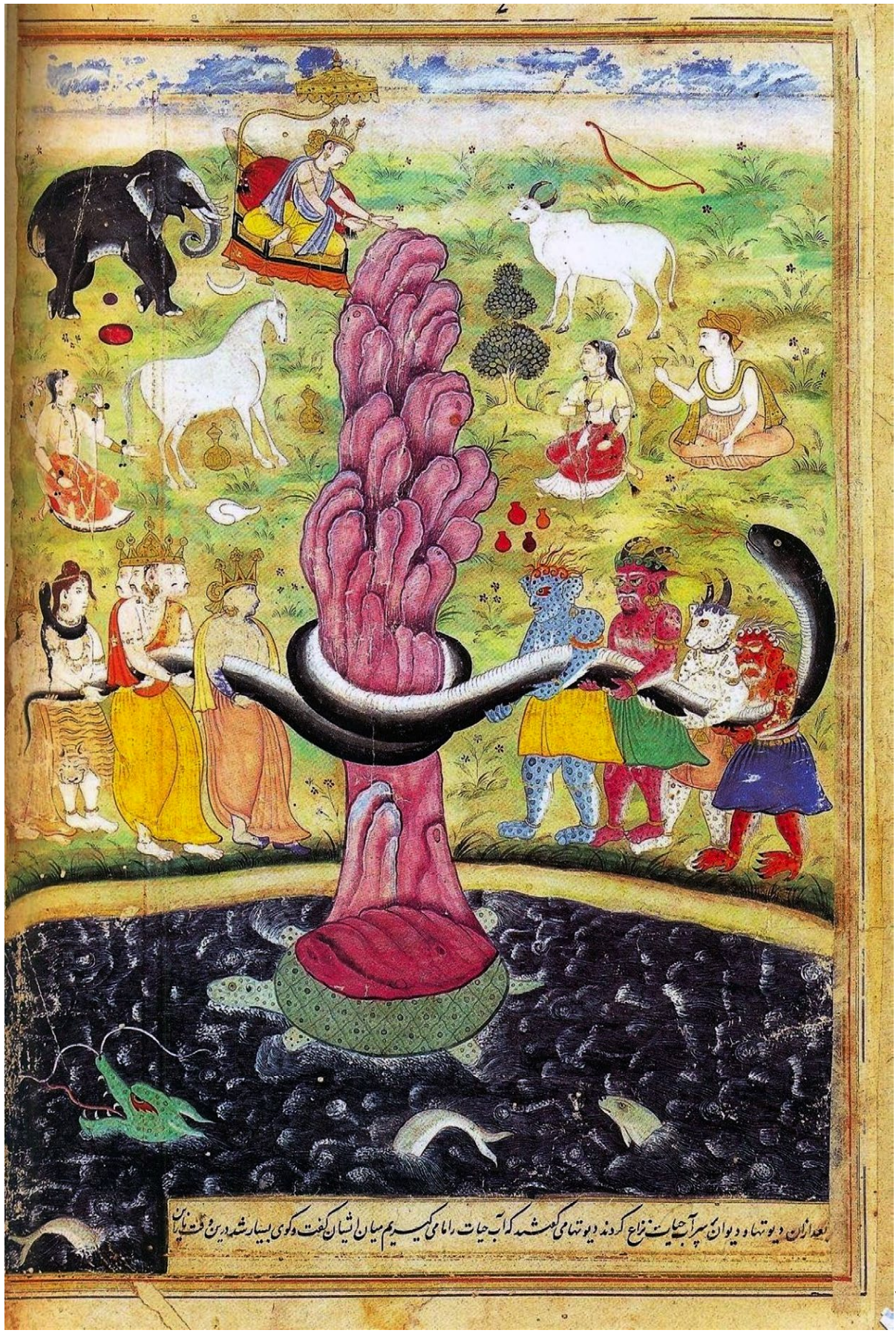
Such a person does not dwell upon the faults of his persecutors, his enemies, or even those who want to kill him. Rather, he perceives only their virtues and his own shortcomings.

A shining example of this disposition is found in Sri Kureshacharya, the illustrious disciple of Sri Ramanujacharya. Even toward the attendants of King Krimikantha — who was a cruel persecutor, a hater of *vaiṣṇava*s, a heretic, an attempted murderer, and who destroyed the eyes of Kuresh — he did not cultivate *fault-finding*. Instead, perceiving virtue in them and fault within himself, he addressed them in the following spirit: "You are my true benefactors. Those two eyes, which constantly enticed me into worldly illusion and distracted me from beholding the beauty of my guru's toenails, have now been destroyed by you. May Lord Vishnu bestow his blessings upon you."

This was not a momentary outburst of pious rhetoric, nor a display of literary sentiment intended to impress the world. It was the genuine realization of a saint.

To maintain such a vision, to perceive one's own fault and the virtue of one's tormentor even after one's eyes have been violently torn out, is a measure of humility deeper than a blade of grass and tolerance greater than that of a tree. The depth of such realization lies far beyond the comprehension of one like me, who remains perpetually inclined toward seeing the faults of others.

One who is *amānī* (free from all desire for personal honor), *mānada* (eager to offer honor to others), and constantly engaged in *hari-kīrtana* never



Unknown artist.Persian. 1605.

The demons and the devatas *churn the ocean of milk*

Attributed to Purkhu and his workshop. Kangra, Pahari school. Ca. 1800–1815

Jarasandha's army advances towards Krishna and Balaram

busies himself with perceiving the faults of others, discussing those faults behind their backs, or suspecting that others are scrutinizing his own defects and therefore attributing blame to them.

Where is the leisure for a genuine chanter of the holy name to search for the faults of others?

The *amānī jīva* sees only his own shortcomings. The *mānada jīva* perceives even the genuine faults of others as opportunities for instruction, as teachers sent for his own purification.

Srila Namacharya Haridas Thakur accepted the criticism and persecution directed toward him by the Muslims as nothing but the consequence of his own shortcomings. He never placed the slightest blame upon those who criticized or tormented him.

He prayed:

prabhu-nindā āmi ye śunilu apāra
tā'ra śāsti karilena īśvara āmāra

bhāla haila, ithe baḍa pāilu santoṣa
alpa śāsti kari' kṣamilena baḍa doṣa

kumbhīpāka haya viṣṇu-nindana-śravaṇe
tāhā āmi vistara śunilu pāpa-kāṇe

yogya śāsti karilena īśvara tāhāra
hena pāpa āra yena nahe punar-bāra

"I heard an abundance of blasphemy against the Lord; therefore, the Lord has awarded me this punishment. This is most auspicious. Indeed, I have found great satisfaction in it. By administering only a slight punishment, he has mercifully forgiven my grave offence. One who listens to blasphemy of Lord Vishnu becomes destined for the hell known as Kumbhipak, and with these sinful ears I listened to such blasphemy repeatedly. Therefore, the Lord has awarded me a punishment fully befitting my offence. May I never again commit such a sin." (*Caitanya-bhāgavata, ādi* 16.166–169) 🍊

(To be continued in the next issue).

— Translated by Raya Ramananda Das

By Kshitindranath Majumdar. Bengali school. 1891–1975.

Mayadevi offering obeisances to Haridas Thakur

Painting by an unknown artist. Kangra or Garhwal, circa 1810-1820.

Balaram fights the demon Jarasandha

Closing Thoughts
The Tyrant and The Devotee

Forgiveness is one of the primary qualities of a devotee. In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.11.29-32, Krishna describes to Uddhava the qualities of a devotee. The first three symptoms are: *kṛpālur* — they are unable to tolerate the suffering of others; *akṛta-drohas* — they never injure others; and *titikṣuḥ sarva-dehinām* — even if others are aggressive, they are tolerant and forgiving toward all living entities.

Although the *vaiṣṇavas* show anger when persons offend Krishna and his devotees, they are not angry with the offender. As Srila Prabhupada describes in this issue of *Bindu*, saintly persons hate the sin and not the sinner. When faced with oppression and injustice against themselves, devotees are tolerant and forgiving. This is seen in the story of Kuresh, the saintly disciple of Srila Ramanujacharya.

The history of Ramanujacharya's famous disciple Kuresh first appeared in the thirteenth century in Pinpalagiya Perumal Jiyar's Tamil and Sanskrit book, *Ārāyirappaṭi Guru-paramparā-prabhāva*. It describes the fanatical South Indian Chola king, Krimikantha, as a devoted worshiper of Lord Shiva and an avowed enemy of all *vaiṣṇavas*. He sought to compel everyone in his kingdom to abandon their faith and take up worship of Lord Shiva. Knowing that Srila Ramanujacharya was the most prominent *vaiṣṇava ācārya* of his time, the king sent messengers to summon him to his court, intending to either force his conversion or put him to death. Sensing the imminent danger to his master, Ramanuja's disciple Kuresh insisted on taking his place. He dressed himself in the clothes of a *sannyāsī* and intercepted the king's men while Ramanuja safely escaped into the forest.

Painting by an unknown artist. Pahari school. From the kingdom of Chamba. Ci. 1730-1740.

Krishna and Balaram touch the feet of Vasudev and Devaki

Adopting the dress and *daṇḍa* of a *sannyāsī*, Kuresh presented himself at the palace court before King Krimikantha. When Kuresh unflinchingly asserted the supremacy of Lord Vishnu, King Krimikantha flew into a rage. Incensed by his defiance, the king ordered his courtiers to put out his eyes. Kuresh met this cruel punishment with astonishing bravery; he stated that eyes which had looked upon a tyrant who blasphemed the Supreme Lord were no longer fit to remain. When the king's men had finished gouging out the eyes of Kuresh, rather than displaying anger, he stood before them with folded hands and said, "May Lord Narayan bless you for allowing me to serve my guru in this way."

This fundamental principle of forgiveness is underscored in an ancient historical exchange between Jamadagni, and his son Parshuram. Kartaviryarjuna abused his power by forcefully stealing Jamadagni Rishi's sacred, wish-fulfilling cow from his hermitage. In retaliation, Parshuram hunted down and killed the king to retrieve the cow. This was deemed wrong by his father because a Brahmin's highest spiritual duty is to practice absolute forgiveness rather than succumb to violent anger. Kartaviryarjuna abused his power by forcefully stealing Jamadagni Rishi's sacred, wish-fulfilling cow from his hermitage. In retaliation, Parshuram hunted down and killed the king to retrieve the cow. This was deemed wrong by his father because a Brahmin's highest spiritual duty is to practice absolute forgiveness rather than succumb to violent anger. Hearing that Parshuram had killed

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Painting by Dhriti Dasi.

Wonderful Krishna

the offender Kartaviryarjuna, Jamadagni instructed Lord Parshuram that it would have been better to have forgiven him:

> *kṣamayā rocate lakṣmīr brāhmī saurī yathā prabhā*
> *kṣamiṇām āśu bhagavāṁs tuṣyate harir īśvaraḥ*
>
> "The duty of a Brahmin is to culture the quality of forgiveness, which is illuminating like the sun. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is pleased with those who are forgiving." (*Bhāg.* 9.15.40.)

The next few issues of Bindu will continue with the rest of the article titled, "Overlooking Faults and Finding Virtues". In those volumes we will further explore various subtle nuances of this very important subject for devotees. We hope that our readers will find the discussion helpful for their progress on the path of ecstatic love for the beloved son of Nanda Maharaja.